



City of East Providence
Mayor Roberto L. DaSilva

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City of East Providence awarded \$200K federal grant for new incubator space

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The City of East Providence has been awarded a U.S. Economic Development Administration (USEDA) Adjustment Assistant Program planning grant.

East Providence has been awarded \$200,000 to be used toward its East Providence Small Business and Blue Economy Incubator Project.

Specifically, the grant, which requires a \$100,000 match, will be used for the development of a feasibility study. The feasibility study, which includes market research, potential competition and analysis of startup and development costs, is the first step in the city transforming the former Oldham Elementary School into a multi-use small business incubator. The study will also assist in the development of a plan of action for the space.

The incubator will be centered on the creation of jobs through business startups and will provide a network of business resources to small businesses that will ensure a greater level of long-term success.

“Mayor DaSilva and the City of East Providence have been very active when it comes to economic development and finding innovative ways to repurpose old properties to revitalize neighborhoods and improve economic opportunity. This new federal investment will support East Providence's plans to create a new hub for local small business growth and development,” said U.S. Senator Jack Reed.

“This federal funding will help jumpstart the City of East Providence’s effort to create jobs and attract more startup talent. I want to thank Mayor DaSilva for his strong partnership in anchoring Rhode Island’s Blue Economy and other promising sectors in the East Bay,” said Senator Whitehouse.

“We can create good-paying jobs by building on Rhode Island’s Blue Economy strengths,” said Rep. Seth Magaziner. “This federal funding will be used to help transform a former school into a bustling incubator that will create jobs and support small businesses in Rhode Island.”

“We are thankful for the leadership, understanding and support of our federal leaders and thank Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and Congressman Seth Magaziner on their involvement in supporting innovative spaces that will help bolster our small business and blue economy,” Mayor Bob DaSilva said. “The City envisions a thriving space involving several sectors of the local economy as well as an educational component, integrating students from the high school career and technical center.”

The former Oldham School, which was constructed in 1952 and ceased to operate as a school in 2013, had been used as a storage facility for the school district for the last decade.

“Now, under the direction of the city, we will breathe new life into the prominent landmark and give it a pulse again,” Mayor DaSilva added. “Once completed, the project will help boost job creation and diversify and strengthen the regional economy.”

Areas of focus for the space include, but are not limited to, food production (specifically baking and gluten-free production), technology, sustainability/renewable energy, the arts, and the intersection of these areas. The space will fill several gaps in the local economy and provide opportunities for our local entrepreneurs, many of which are of low-moderate income.

The concept of the space evolved from feedback received through the city’s partnership with Roger Williams University. RWU students worked with the City’s Administration and Planning & Economic Development planners to develop the Riverside Square Revitalization Assessment and Recommendations plan.